

Recommendation 2080 (2015)¹

Freedom of religion and living together in a democratic society

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly, referring to its [Resolution 2076 \(2015\)](#) on freedom of religion and living together in a democratic society, and drawing attention to its [Recommendation 1962 \(2011\)](#) on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue and [Recommendation 1975 \(2011\)](#) on living together in 21st-century Europe: follow-up to the report of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Council of Europe, reiterates its support for an integrated approach to issues relating to “living together” and refers to the numerous proposals that those texts contain, not all of which have been followed by practical measures.

2. Convinced of the urgent need to step up the Council of Europe’s action so that it can better support member States’ efforts to combat the danger that fanaticism and religious extremism, but also xenophobia and rejection of anything different, represent to our democratic societies, the Assembly confirms its readiness to help draw up a comprehensive Council of Europe strategy on this subject.

3. The Assembly further considers that, in this context, the Council of Europe should step up and make more substantial its co-operation with the main religious communities and the main European organisations representing the secular humanist and philosophical world. It consequently recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

3.1. set up a stable and officially recognised platform for dialogue between the Council of Europe and senior representatives of religions and non-denominational organisations in order to consolidate the existing relations with those partners and foster active commitment by all the stakeholders in activities to promote the Organisation’s fundamental values, which underpin “living together”;

3.2. include this initiative among the Council of Europe’s action priorities and develop it speedily in consultation with the parties concerned, closely involving the Parliamentary Assembly in it; invite, if appropriate, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, and possibly other partners, to contribute to it;

3.3. link to this platform for dialogue the holding of thematic meetings on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue, which should be made more operational;

3.4. develop synergies between the platform and the thematic meetings on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue with other Council of Europe projects and initiatives in the field of education, culture and youth, such as the “No Hate Speech Movement – Young People for Human Rights Online”, “Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights” and “Intercultural cities”.

1. *Assembly debate* on 30 September 2015 (33rd Sitting) (see [Doc. 13851](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Mr Rafael Huseynov; [Doc. 13886](#), opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Sir Edward Leigh; and [Doc. 13871](#), opinion of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 30 September 2015 (33rd Sitting).

